

Chapter 7

Culture and Personality or Psychological School in Anthropology



‘The primary aim of psychological school of anthropological is to examine the inter-relationships between culture and personality’ (Malefijt 1974: 293). According to available sources, Francis L. K. Hsu (1909–1999), a China-born American anthropologist, is supposed to have suggested to rename ‘Culture and Personality school’, as the ‘psychological school of anthropology’ in his book *Psychological Anthropology: Approaches to Culture and Personality* (1961). Hsu is also considered as one among the founders of psychological anthropology. He has updated and renewed the methodology of cultural and personality research. His theory has influenced the development of Chinese psychology. His research provides a non-Western perspective on the study of human behaviour and is of great reference value to the research of behavioural science. Regarding the beginning of this school, there are two opinions. The first, attributes it to Sigmund Freud’s book, *Totem and Taboo*, published in 1913. Freud was a psychoanalyst. In this book, Freud sought the causal explanation of *Totem and Taboo* in his much controversial concept of *Oedipus Complex*. It was considered as his sudden foray into the field of anthropology; therefore, vehemently retaliated by Boasians in America, and Malinowski in Britain. We shall be discussing on this issue later in this chapter. The second, and the more popular and accepted view, with regard to the genesis of this school has been, that it was triggered by the publication of *Coming of Age in Samoa* by Margaret Mead in 1928. And thereafter, a number of anthropologists having some propensity for psychology, such as, Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, Abram Kardiner, Cora Du Bois, under the leadership of Franz Boas, nurtured this school and gave altogether a new dimension to cultural anthropology in America. We shall be discussing about the contributions of each of the exponents of this school also later in the chapter.

By the end of the second decade of the twentieth century, anthropology as a discipline, had come of age. The teaching and researches in anthropology had started in several countries of all the continents. The era of evolutionism, diffusionism and historical schools were already on the wane, and structural-functionalism and functionalism were in their infancy. Up till now, the anthropologists laid emphasis in the

study of social institution, or cultural traits and complexes. There was hardly any thought given to the study of 'individual' in the study of society and culture; though, the society was composed of the individuals. At such a juncture, a number of psychologically oriented anthropologists, working under the leadership of Franz Boas in America proposed that in the study of 'culture', not only the study of different institutions, culture traits and complexes were necessary, but the study of 'individual', who are the units of a society and carriers of cultural traditions, was also equally important. It was also proposed that not only the society and culture affect the personality of an individual, but individuals also quite often make their impact on society and culture. History was replete with example that the personality of exemplary individuals had changed the very course of cultural history of mankind, such as, the Jesus, Prophet Mohammad, the Buddha, Karl Marx, Mahatma Gandhi, Mao Tse Tung, and many others. Even in small scale societies, we find such individuals, who become cult-figures to their followers, like Bhagwan Birsa Munda in the state of Jharkhand. Therefore, it was felt that the study of individual was also necessary in anthropology that studied all aspects of man, society, and culture.

The problem was how to study an individual in anthropology? Anthropology has been such a discipline, which has seldom hesitated to borrow ideas and techniques from other disciplines. Therefore, in order to solve this problem, it was resolved to take the help of psychological techniques, such as Rorschach, Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), Dolls and Drawing, that the psychologists applied to study the individual personality, known under the rubric 'projective tests'. Thus, for the first-time anthropologists applied projective tests in their study of different cultures. This is also known as 'holy marriage' between anthropology and psychology, and the product of it is called 'Culture and Personality School'.

However, much before this development took place during the first half of the twentieth century, one discovers that the seeds of the psychological school were sown centuries before by some pre-Freudian scholars like, John Locke (1632–1704), David Hume (1711–1776), Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), and Jacob Burckhardt (1818–1897). John Locke in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* wrote, as early as in 1690, that 'even little or almost insensible impressions on our tender infancies have very important and lasting consequences'. What he really meant was that even the minor and ordinary incidences that take place in one's life, sometimes make everlasting psychological impact in the mind of the individual. The term 'National Character' seems to have gained popularity in anthropological researches during the Second World War, when the warring nations assigned anthropologists to study the national character of the enemy nations to devise strategies in the war. However, it is very little known that David Hume wrote an essay, titled *Of National Character*, as early as in 1742 that very much resembled the ideas of John Locke.

It was the German philosopher Immanuel Kant who first wrote the book titled *Anthropology* in 1789. In this book, Kant discussed the characters of the different peoples, and suggested that people differed in characters because of historical factors and the process of socialisation that the members of the group undergo, which we call today *enculturation* in anthropology. Kant's description of German national

character, based upon his observation of a plethora of behavioural data is interesting, as such:

The German is home-loving; solid but not brilliant; industrious, thrifty, cleanly, without much flash of genius; intelligent, capable, but lacking in wit or taste; over-methodical, pedantic, without impulse towards equality, but addicted to painstaking hierarchical grading of society that sets title and rank above natural talent; docile under government, accepting despotism than resisting the established order of authority. (quoted from Malefijt 1974: 294)

Another pre-Freudian, a Swiss historian, Jacob Burkhardt described in *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy*, as early as in 1878, that how the Renaissance had influenced the people and made its impact on the personality of the mediaeval Italian. To quote Burkhardt:

In the Middle Ages (*in Italy*), men tended to identify themselves closely with collective social entities such as their ethnic or national groups, corporations, and extended families. The Renaissance was marked by the rise of individualism. Italians became less dependent upon their social affiliations, and were thus enabled to view their governments with greater objectivity. (quoted from Malefijt 1974: 294)

7.1 Sigmund Freud

Sigmund Schlomo Freud (1856–1939) was son of a Jewish parent, born in a small town of Freiberg in the former Austrian Empire. Freud was the eldest son of eight children born to his parents. Freud's mother Amalia Nathansohn, was the third wife of his father Jakob. She was 20 years younger to her husband. This point is important to remember, as it will be referred to while discussing about Freud's most controversial theory or concept of *Oedipus Complex*. Freud's father left Freiberg for Leipzig and finally in 1860 for Vienna. In 1865, at the age of 9, Freud was admitted into a very prominent school. Freud proved to be an outstanding student, and graduated from school in 1873 with distinction. He loved literature and was equally proficient in German, French, Italian, Spanish, English, Hebrew, Latin, and Greek languages. Freud entered the university at the age of 17. He obtained a degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1881 from the University of Vienna. In 1885, he was appointed a Docent (equivalent to the rank of a Reader or Associate Professor), and finally, in 1902, a Professor in Neuropathology. By profession, Freud was a neurologist. He is known as the founder of *psychoanalysis*, and his clinical method for treating psychopathological patients was through dialogue between the patient and the psychoanalyst.

Freud is universally known for his contributions in the fields of psychology, psychoanalysis, psychotherapy, psychiatry, psychopathology, and so on; however, our concern here is not to discuss in detail about all his contributions in social science in general, and psychology in particular. But our concern here is solely anthropological. And that too because, like Sir James Frazer, Freud wrote a book *Totem and Taboo* in 1913, without having ever laid his eyes on a primitive man, least to have a

first-hand experience of any primitive society and culture. This was the period when the evolutionists had almost retired of their mission to discover the ‘causal explanation’ of the unilinear evolution of all the social institutions, including *totemism* prevalent in many societies in the world, from Australia to Canada, and from India to South Africa and to South America. Durkheim had already furnished his functional interpretation of the totemistic Aruntas of Australia that how totemism helped them in maintaining their social cohesion and solidarity, as also the continuity of the society itself. Radcliffe-Brown and Malinowski were still in the formative phase of their postulates of ‘social structure’ and ‘biological-functional’ interpretation of culture, respectively. At this very juncture, with his *Totem and Taboo*, Freud suddenly, barged into the anthropological territory. He had of course read Frazer’s *Totemism* (1887) and Robertson Smith’s *The Religion of the Semites* (1956), besides reading many other evolutionists. His interest in anthropology was not by chance. It appears that it was his very deliberate attempt to universalise his much controversial, criticised, and often condemned theory of *Oedipus Complex*. We shall later examine how the very idea of the *Oedipus Complex* emerged into the mind of Freud. However, let us discuss how and why Freud sought the origin of *Totemism* in the myth of *Oedipus*.

7.1.1 *Oedipus Complex*

Sophocles (c. 497 BC–c. 406 BC) was an ancient Greek playwright, and also considered to be a homosexual. He wrote a play, *Oedipus Rex*. According to a Greek mythology, Oedipus was the King of Thebes in ancient Greece. When he was born, there occurred an *oracle* that Oedipus would kill King Laius, his father, and marry his own mother Jocasta. Believing the *oracle*, King Laius decided to kill Oedipus—the newly born baby, so that the *oracle* would never be true, and he would never die. Therefore, he handed over the baby to one of his most trusted messengers to kill the child. The messenger, instead of killing the child, left the infant (Oedipus) near a hill with hands and legs tied, unsafe and unprotected to die a natural death. A shepherd stumbled upon the child by chance and picked him up. He gave the child to another shepherd. Eventually, the infant Oedipus was brought to the house of Polybus, the King of Corinth and his queen Merope adopted the child, as she had no child of her own. There are several versions of the myth, which I prefer to skip.

As Oedipus grew up, he became very brave like a gallant knight with leadership qualities. He organised an army and decided to kill King Laius, who had become very tyrant by this time, without knowing that he was his actual father. He attacked Thebes, killed King Laius and married queen Jocasta, as per the ancient Greek tradition that the victor King married the wife of the deceased King. Later, when he came to know of the *oracle*, he realised what a sin he had committed! He understood that he had killed his own father and married his own mother. This made him suffer from an everlasting *guilt*. The story goes on, but our purpose here is only up to the realisation of *guilt* by Oedipus.

During the 1880s and 1890s, Sophocles' play was staged in Vienna with phenomenal success. Freud was then in Vienna, and watched the play with intense delight. Henceforth, the term *Oedipus* began to float in his mind. As a psychotherapist, he was already dealing with some cases of parent–child conflict. He also analysed the dreams of others and his own also. Relationship with his mother, as referred to earlier, is also significant to note. After his father's death in 1896, and having seen the play *Oedipus Rex*, Freud began using the term '*Oedipus*'. On 15 October 1897, in a letter to his friend and colleague Wilhelm Fliess, Freud wrote, 'I have found, in my case too [the phenomenon of] being in love with my mother, and jealous of my father, and I now consider it a universal event in early childhood, ...' (Masson 1985: 272). A quote from Steven Pinker is also relevant to understand Freud's preoccupation with *Oedipus Complex*: 'The idea that boys want to sleep with their mothers strikes most men as the silliest thing they have ever heard. Obviously, it did not seem so to Freud, who wrote that as a boy he once had erotic reaction to watching his mother dressing. But Freud had a wet-nurse, and may not have experienced the early intimacy that would have tipped off his perceptual system that Mrs Freud was his mother. The Westermarck theory has out-Freuded Freud'. (Pinker 1997). What is worth noting here is that Amalia Nathansohn (Freud's mother) was relatively young during Freud's childhood and thus of reproductive age. In defence of Freud, it can be said that since Freud in his early childhood had a 'wet-nurse' (*a woman who breast-feeds and cares for another's child*), therefore, he might not have experienced early intimacy with his mother. But what of that? He must have been aware that Amalia Nathansohn was her real biological mother.

In the above paragraphs, I have just attempted to understand the very *psych* of Sigmund Freud. He seems to have been truly obsessed with sex and male–female relationship. Whether in the analysis of dreams, or in treating any psychopathological patient, he attempted to find the cause of everything in sex-drive and *libido* only. To my mind, in spite of his unquestionably great reputation and contributions in the field of psychoanalysis during his time, Freud himself was perhaps a *psychic case*. For example, as he was a passionate smoker since the age of 24, that ultimately caused him cancer, and led him to a very painful death by injecting three doses of morphine; his colleague Wilhelm Fliess when suggested him to stop smoking, Freud's response was that smoking enhanced his capacity to work, and that any kind of addiction, including tobacco, was a substitute for *masturbation* (Masson 1985).

Freud was, in fact, interested to device a grand universal theory applicable to every human culture. In order to do so, the first clue he discovered was in the play *Oedipus Rex* of Sophocles; second, the feelings that he developed for his father and mother, he considered it to be present in childhood in every human being; third, in order to strengthen his scheme, he also included Lamarck's concept of use and disuse of organs, and Herbert Spencer's unilinear evolutionary concept of progress from simple to complex forms.

In the light of the above, let us examine how fancifully Freud attempted to discover the origin of totemism through the concept of *Oedipus Complex*. He fantasised about a primordial group that lived soon after man's evolution from apes; in which the father in the group was all powerful and held absolute right over all the females of

the group. Because of father's monopoly over all the women of the group, all his sons felt jealous of him. Consequently, one day, they decided to kill him. And after killing, they ate the flesh of their father. However, after committing such heinous *patricide*, the sons developed a sense of *guilt*. Overcome by the *guilt* afterward, the sons decided to obey their father's commands and abstained from sexual intercourse with their mothers and sisters. And with a view to expiate for their *guilt* for such a wrongdoing, they selected a totemic object, like an animal, bird, edible fruit, root or plant, etc. Thus, the totemic object was considered as a symbolic substitute for father. They also declared that their totem must be protected; and only annually, in order to reinforce their self-imposed *incest* prohibitions, the totem would be ritually consumed by the group as a reminder of their *guilt* for *patricide*. This is how the institution and practice of *totemism* in human society emerged, according to Freud.

It is now left to the readers and theorists in anthropology to react, whether this explanation of the origin of totemism by Freud is plausible and acceptable, or not? Could the explanation ever be empirically proved? Is it not absurd to think that a *sense of imaginary guilt* for one's wrongdoing committed at any primordial time, would be *genetically* transmitted to all the future generations of mankind for all time to come? And what about the societies that have no totemic organisation? Do such totem-less societies not observe incest taboo? And therefore, is it logical to think that in every society a son would hate his father and love his mother, sheer because of father's authority and absolute sexual rights over his wife? Is it possible that based upon utter fanciful personal feelings and experience, anyone could derive a universal theory? These and many other questions plagued the minds of several anthropologists in America and Britain even during the life time of Sigmund Freud. Freud had perhaps no answer to the above.

First, it was Boas and his followers, who repudiated Freud's fanciful imaginations in no uncertain terms regarding the origin of totemism in *Oedipus Complex*. Boas rejected Freud's essay as one-sided that did nothing to enhance the understanding of cultural development'. Kroeber (1952) wrote that Freud's conjectures evidenced a 'bewilderingly fertile imagination', and (Kroeber) made some 'twelve detailed criticisms' (quoted from Malefijt 1974: 295).

Second, it was the British social anthropologist MalinowskiMalinowski, who was then doing fieldwork in Trobriand Islands in the West Pacific, when Freud's *Totem and Taboo* appeared. Malinowski attempted to examine Freud's Oedipus Complex among the Trobrianders. The Trobrianders were a matriarchal society. In his book *Sex and Repression in Savage Society* (1927), Malinowski categorically denied the 'universality' of *Oedipus Complex*. In a matriarchal society like that of Trobrianders, the biological father was not the supreme authority in the family. The supreme authority in a Trobriand family was the maternal uncle of a child, from whom the child inherited property. A maternal uncle was the disciplinarian in the family, not the biological father of the child. Thus, Malinowski challenged Freud that *power*, not *sexual jealousy*, was the cause of *Oedipus Complex* in a non-western society, therefore, it was not universal. A follower of Freud, Earnest Jones tried to resist Malinowski's findings, but it was all in vain. His arguments against Malinowski were so superficial that it hardly needs to be mentioned here. On the other hand,

Abram Kardiner and Dorothy Eggan, both supported Malinowski. Eggan (1953: 286) showed that the *Oedipus Complex* was also absent in Hopi Indian personality.

In addition to the above criticisms against the *Oedipus Complex*, Freud had to face the brunt of Boasians on yet another account. At the time, when all the schemes of the nineteenth century evolutionism had been almost buried, and in its place different historical schools had emerged, Freud attempted to swim against the current, and again based upon his dogmatic views in psychoanalysis, furnished a 'biologically-determined-strict-unilinear' concept of evolution of human cultures. He posited that:

Mankind had developed along the same lines as infants growing into adults. Contemporary 'savages' represented an *arrested* stage of the childhood of man, while Western man had attained mental maturity. As adulthood could not be reached without passing through infancy and childhood, so cultures must go through predetermined biological stages of mental and social development. Not only did savages resemble children, but their fears, compulsions, lack of motivations, and attraction to what is forbidden were traits that Freud had frequently encountered in his neurotic patients. (quoted Malefijt 1974: 296).

There is no two opinion that by nature, Freud was 'ambitious'. And in his zeal to device any grand theory, even without having a first-hand ethnographic field experience of any primitive society/culture; he solely, and of course erroneously, depended only upon his own and that of his psychopathological patients' experiences whom he treated. He believed that what went on in his mind, must be going in all others' mind. Once he understood himself, he felt qualified to understand humankind. However, regardless of all polemics, Freud's convictions prompted such great insights into psychology that it revolutionised the discipline in the twentieth century. And today, when we discuss about the history of psychology, it is subsumed under three broad categories, viz. Pre-Freudian, Freudian, and Post-Freudian.

7.2 Ruth Fulton Benedict

Although, Margaret Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* in 1928, is generally understood, according to one school of thought, as the beginning point of culture and personality, or often called, the psychological school in anthropology; but Ruth Benedict was not only senior to her in age, but she was also instrumental in initiating Mead into the discipline of anthropology. When Ruth Benedict taught anthropology in Bernard College in 1922, Margaret Mead was one of her students. In course of time, both became most intimate friends, and together under the leadership of Franz Boas, greatly contributed to the development of American Cultural Anthropology, and took culture and personality school of thought to new heights by their invaluable contributions. Benedict also exercised much influence on Mead. Their strange relationship was both, as academic collaborators and friends, as also of lovers. According to Banner (2003), 'It was not until the death of Mead (*in 1978*) that the lesbian nature of their relationship was discussed openly'. It was Ruth Benedict who introduced Margaret Mead to Franz Boas. Earlier, Benedict came in contact with Alexander

Goldenweiser, a student of Franz Boas, while attending a course in anthropology at the New School of Social Research in New York. Under the influence of Alexander Goldenweiser, her love for anthropology knew no bound.

Ruth Fulton Benedict was born on 5 June 1887 in New York city. Her father Fredrick S. Fulton, a very successful surgeon of his time, died suddenly when Ruth was only two-year-old. Death of Dr Fredrick made irreparable damage to the life of her mother Beatrice Shuttack and Ruth both. Her mother Beatrice lived throughout her remaining life in grief for her husband that made Ruth Benedict's life miserable. In addition, when Ruth attained the age of eight, it was discovered that she was partially deaf. Because of all these reasons, Ruth spent her childhood mostly in despair and depression. She preferred to remain alone and avoided mixing with the girls of her age-group. She lived in her own world of fancy.

By the turn of the century, Ruth's mother shifted to Buffalo, and got a job of a librarian at the Buffalo Public Library to support her two daughters. Ruth was here admitted to St. Margaret's Academy. At this very age, she began to write poetry under the pseudonym Anne Singleton. After completing her High School, she entered Vassar College, wherefrom she graduated in 1909 with distinction in English literature. Thereafter, for a complete year, she travelled to different countries in Europe. After her return from Europe, due to financial constraints and hardship, she took the job of an English teacher in a school in California. In 1914 she was married to Stanley Rossiter Benedict, a professor of chemistry at the Cornell University Medical School in New York City. To add to her further misfortune and disappointment, she did not bear any child even after 14 years of marriage. This ultimately resulted into further escalation of strained relationship with her husband, and finally, their separation. This is how her marriage-life also ended in grief.

Up to now, Benedict had lived a torn life between love and hate. She was in search of doing something fulfilling that could satiate her academic thirst. And when she attended the course of Anthropology at the New School of Social Research, New York, and came in contact with Alexander Goldenweiser, and through him to Franz Boas, she seemed to have discovered her destination. Alexander Goldenweiser sent Ruth Benedict to work as a graduate student with Franz Boas at Columbia University in 1921. There she became so devoted to Boas that she considered him as a father figure, and lovingly called him 'Papa Franz'. She obtained her Ph.D. in 1923. Topic of her Ph.D. dissertation was *Concept of Guardian Spirit in North America*. Boas regarded Benedict as an asset to the Department of Anthropology so much so that he appointed her as an Assistant Professor in Anthropology in Columbia University in 1931. Thenceforth, anthropology became the very purpose of her life.

At the age of 61, Benedict died in New York City on 17 September 1948. Even after her death, Benedict's legacy continues in America. The American Anthropological Association instituted two awards in her name; the *first* for the best monograph by one writer, and *second* for the best edited volume in anthropology. On 20 October 1995, a postage stamp was issued in her name. In Stony Brook University, a college has been named after her. And in 2005, Ruth Fulton Benedict was inducted into the prestigious National Women's Hall of America.

The reason for having furnished some of the very personal account of life of Ruth Benedict in the preceding paragraphs, is that I think, *anthropology of an anthropologist is also reflected in his/her personality*. The finest example of it is that of Malinowski and his eccentric nature. Malinowski's ecocentrism is reflected in his claims and writing as well. Benedict's knack for *poetry* is reflected in her *The Patterns of Culture* (1934), in which she has discussed the cultures of Zuni, Dobu, and Kwakiutl Indians through a number of poems that are recited or sung during different rituals and ceremonies observed by the natives. The students revered Ruth Benedict. She would financially help even those students whom she hardly knew, and that too without any self-interest, if she found someone confused and struggling to find a place in his/her life. Although such gestures brought her veneration and gratitude, but she did not allow it to result in familiarity. 'The core of her personality was out of reach; as easy but unassailable dignity kept people (*away*) from getting too close (*to her*)' (Kardiner and Preble 1961: 205).

Though she made her entry into anthropology, comparatively, at a later age, and therefore, her number of books and articles may be lesser than many of her contemporaries; but Ruth Benedict is best known for her two monumental books that have made her immortal in the annals of anthropological literature. These books are, viz. *The Patterns of Culture* (1934) and *Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946).

7.2.1 *The Patterns of Culture*

Soon after its publication in 1934, *The Patterns of Culture* was such an instant hit that it became one of the most widely read books in social science in America. It was translated into 14 different languages, and a number of editions were brought out year after year. It was included as a standard reading book in anthropology courses in all the American universities. Margaret Mead, in her 'Foreword' of the book, wrote that Benedict's views have been that '*human cultures are personality writ large*'. The cultural background of an individual is very much reflected in his personality. It is so because, to quote Benedict (1934), 'A culture, like an individual, is a more or less consistent pattern of thought and action'. She further wrote that each culture chooses from 'the great arc of human potentialities' only a few characteristics which become the leading personality traits of the person living in that culture. Such constellation or configuration of unique traits reflect the personality or the *pattern* of a culture. Having been influenced by the German philosopher, cultural critic, poet, writer, and philologist Friedrich Nietzsche, who wrote about the notion of *Apollonian* and *Dionysian* forces, Benedict applied these terms in her book to depict the cultural patterns of three societies, viz. the Zuni (a Pueblo people of Mexico), Kwakiutl of the Pacific Northwest, America, and Dobu of New Guinea (East Indies).

According to Greek mythology, Apollo and Dionysus were both sons of Zeus. Apollo was the god of Sun, characterised by the virtues of rational thinking and order, logic, prudence, and purity. Dialectically, Dionysus was considered as the god of Wine and Dance, characterised by irrationality and chaos, and prone to emotions and

instincts. Taking clue from the aforesaid characteristics of both, Benedict considered Zuni as the representative of *Apollonian culture*, and Kwakiutl and Dobu representing the *Dionysian culture*.

Interestingly, her so important and famous book like *The Patterns of Culture*, was not based upon her own intensive fieldwork; except that she had some first-hand information about Zuni. Her description about Kwakiutl was based on her mentor Franz Boas' work; with Pueblo (Zuni), she had some direct experience; and for Dobu, she relied on the works of Margaret Mead and a New Zealand-born social anthropologist, Reo Fortune's fieldwork.

Benedict very strictly followed Boas' *Cultural Relativism*. She advocated that every culture has to be studied, understood, and interpreted in its own perspective. One should not denigrate or belittle the *values* and *customs* of other's culture. Every custom has its meaning to the people who observe it. We should not make our own values and customs as yardsticks to judge the customs and values of other cultures. In spite of its so wide popularity, *The Patterns of Culture* has been criticised on various grounds also, like for its degree of abstraction and generalisation. The Pueblo (Zuni) may be gentle, peaceful, and largely accommodative people, but even among them some mischievous and treacherous people could be found. Likewise, in general, Kwakiutl or the Dobu may be warlike drunkards, but even among them obedient and peaceful persons could be found. Ruth Benedict, perhaps, had no answer to such anomalies that are often found in any culture.

7.2.2 *Chrysanthemum and the Sword*

Chrysanthemum and the Sword (1946) is considered yet another masterpiece work of Ruth Benedict; though with some controversies. On the one hand, it is first considered as one of the forerunners of the 'National Character' studies, second, one of the best sellers in anthropology, and third, the one that laid down the foundation of a new methodology, known as the 'Study of Culture at a Distance'. On the other hand, it is also considered as one of the most scholarly, but *condemned* books in the discipline. It is a book that dealt with the Japanese National Character, and written with the sole aim to devise war strategies to thwart the advance of the Japanese forces during the Second World War. And it did serve its purpose.

In order to understand the above, one has to understand 'how' and 'why' at all, the book was written. During the Second World War, the Japanese had occupied vast territories in South-East Asia and the Far East, China and even in Russia. The Allies were at a loss to stop the advance of the Japanese forces in the eastern hemisphere on the one hand, and that of the Nazi Germans in Europe and the many parts of Asia and Africa on the other. During this period the 'National Character' studies started in anthropology. Every warring nation wanted to know the national character of the enemy nation.

In 1942, US Office of War Information invited Ruth Benedict and assigned her to study and report the national character of the Japanese. Obviously, Ruth Benedict

could not travel to Japan for this study because of war. Therefore, what she did was that she studied the Japanese folktales, Japanese cartoons, Japanese fictions, Japanese films, etc. and in addition, she also studied the Japanese-Americans, who lived in the United States. Thus, keeping herself at a safe distance from the war-ridden zones, she wrote about the culture of Japan. Hence, such studies are known as 'Study of Culture at a Distance'.

Now some dates are important. In 1944, she submitted the report of her study to the US Office of the War Information. In August 1945, America dropped atom bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and immediately thereafter, the Japanese forces surrendered. And only a year after, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* was published in 1946. Of course, Ruth Benedict has nowhere in the book suggested that in order to force the Japanese forces to stop their advance or to surrender, such a harsh and catastrophic decision to use the nuclear weapon should be taken; but it is criticised and tacitly condemned that the discipline of anthropology, which is meant for welfare of mankind, was used for its devastation and destruction. A few lines from the book is worth quoting. Benedict (1946: 2) writes that the Japanese are:

both aggressive and unaggressive, both militaristic and aesthetic, both insolent and polite, rigid and adaptable, submissive and resentful of being pushed around, loyal and treacherous, brave and timid, conservative and hospitable to new ways....

The above lines of the author clearly maintain that the Japanese national character was, on the one hand, as soft as a Chrysanthemum flower; while on the other, it was as hard and cruel as a sword. From unconfirmed sources it is learnt that Ruth Benedict, taking into consideration the place of Emperor of Japan in Japanese popular culture, formulated the recommendation to President Franklin D. Roosevelt for the continuation of the Emperor's reign in Japan even after the defeat and surrender of the Japanese forces during the Second World War.

From 1947 to 1967 only, 28,000 hardback copies of the book were sold. However, in 1974, a Chinese translation of the book was published from Taiwan. In 2005, when the relationship between the Chinese and the Japanese governments were in strain, it is estimated that approximately, 70,000 copies of the book were sold that year in China alone. Its Japanese translation is still considered as a necessary book in any Japanese home. Later, anthropologists have though criticised the book for its faulty methodology.

7.3 Margaret Mead

Margaret Mead (1901–1978) was one of the most prolific and popular anthropologists of the twentieth century. Like Ruth Benedict, she was also one of the most trusted students of Franz Boas in Columbia University. Through her several books since 1930s till her death, she gave American citizens in general and American parents and teachers in particular, so significant messages relating to the rearing of children and adolescents, that she had become a household name in America. There was a

time, when it was said that an American might not perhaps know the name of his President, but he had got to know the name of Margaret Mead. So was her popularity in America as a scholar and writer during her lifetime.

Mead was born and brought up in Pennsylvania. Her father was a Professor of Finance, and mother, a sociologist. She studied in Buckingham Friends School in Pennsylvania, and received her college education in Bernard College, New York. In Bernard College, she was a student of Ruth Benedict. Despite being her student, Mead developed such a friendship with Ruth Benedict that lasted till Benedict's death. After her Bachelor's degree from Bernard, Ruth Benedict inspired her to do anthropology, and introduced her to Franz Boas in Columbia University. Benedict and Mead both remained very trusted pupils of Boas. Mead received her Master's degree in 1924 and Ph.D. in 1929, both from Columbia University. In 1925, she set out for Samoa Island to do the fieldwork. After her return from Samoa, she worked for sometime in the American Museum of Natural History as an Assistant Curator. Mead's personal life has been quite eventful. First, she had a brief affair with the famous linguist Edward Sapir, who was a close friend of Benedict too. As Sapir's ideas relating to marriage and women's role were very conservative, so the affair did not last long, and when Mead left for Samoa, it completely ended. Mead married thrice in her life time. Her first husband was Luther Cressman, a theology student, who later became an anthropologist. After her divorce with Cressman, she married Reo Fortune, a New Zealander in 1928, whom she had met on boat during her return journey from Samoa. Lastly, her long-lasting marriage from 1936 to 1950 was with Gregory Beatson with whom she had a daughter, named Mary Catherine Beatson, who also later became a cultural anthropologist. Mary Catherine's book *With a Daughter's Eye: A Memoir of Margaret Mead and Gregory Beatson* (1984) recounts her upbringing by her scholarly famous parents. In her book Catherine has disclosed two, hitherto, unknown facts of her mother's life. First, that even after divorce with Gregory Beatson, Mead's friendship with Gregory continued throughout her life. And second, that her mother's relationship with Ruth Benedict was partly sexual. During the 1950s, after her divorce with Gregory Beatson, Margaret Mead developed very intimate friendship with anthropologist Rhoda Metraux. From 1955 until her death in 1978, she lived with him. With permission from Catherine Beatson, the letters between the two were published in 2006 that clearly demonstrate their romantic relationship.

Let us examine Mead's contributions in anthropology through her important books.

7.3.1 *Coming of Age in Samoa*

With the publication of *Coming of Age in Samoa* in 1928, Margaret Mead kicked-off her anthropological career for the next sixty years, until her death in 1978. During this period, she wrote and edited a number of books and articles, as also considerably contributed to visual anthropology. There are very few scholars in any discipline,

whose 'debut-book' makes such an everlasting impact in their respective discipline. *Coming of Age in Samoa* is one such book that not only established Margaret Mead as a pioneering researcher in the world of anthropology, but also made her an outstanding anthropologist of international repute from the very start. It was Franz Boas who wrote the 'Foreword' of the book. The book, first laid down the foundation of 'culture and personality' school; second, it generated such a debate on 'nature versus nurture' theory in personality formation of an individual in a culture, that it is still hotly debated among the experts; and third, it is largely believed that this book also marked the advent of 'sex revolution' in America and the Western world between the 1930s and 1960s.

Before we discuss the contentious issues of the book, let us first examine the background behind its production. During the 1930s, American youths were found to suffer from enormous 'stress and strain'. It was generally held that such stress and strain was due to biological reasons. The people from different corners of the world, belonging to different races, religions, and various ethnic backgrounds had flocked to America in search of fortune, and mixed together. It was considered that because of such intermingling of population, they suffered from stress and strain; hence, the 'causal explanation' of the phenomena was 'biological', not 'social and cultural'.

Mead did not agree with such an explanation. She hypothesised that stress and strain among the American youth was because of social and cultural reasons, i.e. because of 'nurture', not 'nature'. In order to prove her viewpoint, she selected the Samoan people and intensively studied their process of socialisation of children, laying emphasis on girl child. She discovered that Samoan children, especially the girls, during their transition from adolescence to puberty to adulthood, seldom suffered from stress and strain. She found that Samoan children even during their adolescence did not have that much of extra curiosity and inhibition regarding sexual affairs, as it was found in American and many Western societies. In Euro-American societies, there were lots of inhibitions regarding sexual matters among the youths as compared to the Samoan society. All this generated stress and strain in their mind. Whereas in Samoa, except for the incestuous relationships, even the parents did not interfere in sexual affairs of their children. It was considered very natural and spontaneous phenomena, and every Samoan, be it a boy or a girl, had sexual experiences much before their marriages. Thus, Mead attempted to give a message that the stress and strain among the American youth was not because of 'biological', but because of 'social and cultural' reasons.

Margaret Mead's depiction of the sexual life of teenagers in Samoan society triggered such a heated discussion in America and the Western world, that eventually, it culminated into 'sex revolution', demanding more and more freedom, including sexual freedom, to women in America and several the other Western countries.

7.3.2 Criticisms

The social impact of the book was such that many American readers were shocked at Mead's observations that Samoan women deferred marriage for many years while enjoyed casual sex before eventually choosing a husband. Some of the ideologically oriented institutions severely criticised the book. For example, Wiker Benjamin, a Roman Catholic ethicist and Professor of Political Science and Human Life Studies at Franciscan University at Steubenville, Ohio, wrote in 2004 in *National Catholic Register*, a conservative catholic newspaper in the United States, 'Mead's findings (*in Samoa*) were merely a projection of her own sexual beliefs and reflected her desire to eliminate restrictions on her own sexuality'. He further added, 'Mead portrait Samoa, a small island in the South Pacific as a 'sexual paradise', ...'. In the same vein, Henry Mark of Intercollegiate Studies Institute, a non-profit educational organisation in America that promotes conservative thoughts, declared, in 2014, *Coming of Age in Samoa* as one of the *50 Worst Books of the 20th Century*.

After five years of death of Margaret Mead, Derek Freeman, an anthropologist from New Zealand, published a book in 1983, titled, *Margaret Mead and Samoa: The Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth*. In this book Freeman challenged many of Mead's findings. Freeman's book again raised the issue, and John Shaw, in 2001, wrote in the *The New York Times* that in the special meeting of the American Anthropological Association held without inviting Freeman, and unanimously held that Freeman's *Margaret Mead and Samoa* has been 'poorly written, unscientific, irresponsible, and misleading'. *Coming of Age in Samoa* generated controversial debate of such a scale, and ferocity that has never been found in the history of anthropology.

Freeman did not stop here. He wrote another book in 1998, titled, *The Fateful Hoaxing of Margaret Mead*. By adding new materials, Freeman concluded that the information with regard to the sexual behaviour of the Samoan adolescents and women in Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* were not authentic. In response, Shankman (2009) supporting Mead's research observed, 'Mead's research was essentially correct, and concluded that Freeman cherry-picked his data and misrepresented both Mead and Samoan culture'.

Derek Freeman's staunch criticisms of Margaret Mead's work on *Samoa* may have been because of any bias, personal, academic, or both; but it could best be interpreted in terms of polarities or contradictions between 'nature' versus 'nurture' theories. Whereas Freeman, though initially trained as a social-cultural anthropologist, for some reasons, in his later years was more inclined to socio-biology and evolutionary psychology, therefore, supported the nature theory. Margaret Mead, on the other hand, even before embarking on for fieldwork in Samoa, had already a hypothesis that the stress and strain among the American youth was not because of biological reasons, but because of social and cultural reason, i.e. 'nurture'. There are other two arguments also that go against Derek Freeman. First, there is a long gap between the fieldworks of Margaret Mead and Freeman. Mead worked in Samoa during 1925–1926, whereas Freeman worked there from 1941 to 1943; and by that time, majority

of Samoans had converted to Christianity. Second, why did Freeman publish both his books only after the death of Margaret Mead, who could not respond to his criticisms? Though, Freeman claims to have apprised of his disagreements to her. However, the Mead-Freeman controversy still continues in anthropological circles.

7.3.3 *Growing Up in New Guinea*

After sensational success of her book *Coming of Age in Samoa* in 1928, Margaret Mead published back-to-back yet another monumental book in 1930, *Growing Up in New Guinea: A Comparative Study of Primitive Education*. The very subtitle of the book speaks volumes about the purpose and its content. *Growing Up in New Guinea* could be considered a sequel to her debut-book *Coming of Age in Samoa*; because in this book, Mead has keenly and very meticulously described the children, childhood, and adolescence of a primitive community, of course, in a different locale, i.e. in the Manus Island of the Manus Province of northern Papua New Guinea. In the last para of the Introduction of the book, Mead (1930: 11) writes:

From the thatched house on piles, built in the centre of the Manus village *Peri*, I learnt the native language, the children's games, the intricacies of social organisation, economic custom and religious belief and practice which formed the social framework within which the child grows up ... in the surrounding lagoon, the children played all day and I watched them, now from the midst of a play group, now from the concealment of the thatched walls. I rode in their canoes, attended their feasts, watched in the house of mourning and sat severely still while the mediums conversed with the spirits of the dead. I observed the children when no grown-up people were present, and I watched their behaviour towards their parents... I watched Manus baby, the Manus child, the Manus adolescent, in an attempt to understand the way in which each of these was becoming a Manus adult.

Margaret Mead worked among the Manus people twice; first, in 1928–29 before the World War II, and second in 1953–54, after the war was over. The result of her first visit was *Growing Up in New Guinea: A Comparative Study of Primitive Education* (1930), and that of the second was *New Lives for Old: Cultural Transformation in Manus—1928–1953* (1956), respectively. During her first fieldwork in 1928, the Manus people were least exposed to Christianity. But the World War II had exposed them to Western culture and technology both. In March 1957, Morton I. Teicher reviewed the *New Lives for Old* in *Social Service Review*, Vol. 31, No. 1. He writes:

Rare indeed in the annals of social science is the kind of report contained in this quite remarkable book. It grows out of a revisit to the Manus of New Guinea after an interval of twenty-five years. These non-literate people first became known in social science in 1930 when Margaret Mead published *Growing Up in New Guinea*, an anthropological classic that has been widely familiar through its broad circulation in an inexpensive paperback edition. The book was based on fieldwork among the Manus in 1928–29. In 1953–54, Margaret Mead went back to New Guinea and had the unusual experiencing of restudying the Manus, meeting some of the people she

had known a quarter century earlier. In the intervening time, the Manus had been transformed by the exposure to western culture brought about by World War II. ... One can profitably enjoy the book simply for its human interest. The excellent 'before-and-after' photographs considerably augment this interest.

7.3.4 *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*

Mead's next significant work was *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* (1935). This work was based upon her fieldwork among the *Arapesh*, *Mundugumor*, and *Tchambuli* tribes of Sepik region of Papua New Guinea. In this work she attempted to examine whether the temperamental differences between the males and females were culturally constructed or innate, i.e. biologically inherited. Mead found that the pattern of male and female behaviour differed in each of the three cultures; at the same time, they also differed from the gender role expectations in the United States of America. She observed that the temperament of both, males and females, among the Arapesh was gentle, responsive, and cooperative. According to her, the Arapesh were pacifists, and maintained peaceful relations with their kinsmen. The Mundugumor were aggressive, warlike, and seeking power and position. Meanwhile the Tchambuli male and female temperaments were distinct from the other two. Tchambuli men 'primped', i.e. mostly spent time in decorating themselves and their hairstyles, while women worked and were more practical than men. This was very much in contrast with the families in twentieth century America. She intimately examined the lives of the above three from infancy to adulthood. She found that many so-called masculine and feminine characteristics were not based upon fundamental sex differences (i.e. innate or biological), but reflected the cultural conditioning of the three societies. *Sex and Temperament* laid down the foundation of Mead's life-long interest in the study of gender differences.

7.3.5 *Male and Female*

Exactly after 14 years, she wrote another book *Male and Female* (1949, reprinted, 2001), further advancing her earlier theory that she had formulated in *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*. In this illuminating book, Mead examined seven Pacific islands tribes and analysed the dynamics of primitive cultures with an aim to explore the evolving meaning of 'male' and 'female' in the *then* American society. In its review, *The New York Times* wrote, 'Dr. Mead's book has come to grips with the cold war between the sexes—*male and female*, and has shown the lasting sexual peace'. In the birth-centennial year of Margaret Mead in 2001, the book was reprinted. In its reprint version, Helen Fisher and Mary Catherine Beatson, Mead's daughter, wrote the 'Introduction'. *Male and Female* is still considered an extraordinary book of great relevance; while Mead's research methodology and fieldwork

remain a blueprint for future generation of scholars in anthropology. Needless to say, all books earlier discussed, are considered to have heralded the 'sex revolution' and 'feminine movements' in America during the twentieth century.

7.3.6 *And Keep Your Powder Dry: An Anthropologist Looks at America*

Margaret Mead, in all the three books, viz. *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928), *Growing Up in New Guinea* (1930), and *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* (1935), had focused her attention to the study of the so-called 'primitive' or the 'savage' societies that lived in isolation in remote parts of the world, and were barely influenced by the Western civilisation and Christianity. She so quickly became such a popular internationally known American anthropologist through these books because through the study of the rearing practices from infancy to adolescence to adulthood, and the gender roles that she observed in these simple societies, she never failed to give a positive message, directly or indirectly, to the American people to learn from her studies.

Till now, she had focused her attention to the study of the communities of the South Seas. But as soon as America joined the War in 1941, her attention shifted from the South Seas to the study of her own country America. The seeds of the Second World War were already sown by the end of the 1930s. It triggered with the Nazi Germany attack on Poland in September 1939. America did not enter the war until the Japanese bombed the American fleet in Pearl Harbour, Hawaii, on 7 December 1941. This event forced America to jump into the war; and prompted Mead to write about the American character with the sole purpose 'to win the war', as also to prove that ethically, it was a 'right decision' by the Americans to jump into the war. This book was written very hurriedly by Margaret Mead; and therefore, according to some critiques, had she taken some more time and collected more facts in completing the book, it would have been even better than what it was *then*. It is to be noted that America entered the Second World War in 1941 December, and Mead published this book in 1942. In spite of that, it became an instant classic, and proved to be one of the bestsellers of its time, and was translated into several languages. After its publication, in all the departments of Anthropology in America, it was made compulsory for American graduate students for over two decades to read it. In 1965, a revised and expanded version of the book was published for the next generation.

Thus, one thing we find common in Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict. Both applied their anthropological acumen during the Second World War for their nation to win the war. Benedict applied it at the behest of the US Office of War Information, whereas Mead did so at her own behest.

This book was written by Mead for the laymen, therefore, it contains only few references. As a result, it appears, as if, the author has made some sweeping generalisations that seem to be 'subjective' in nature. However, a number of theoretical

issues that Mead has also raised in this book, still pose challenge to any social scientist in general and anthropologist in particular, whoever is interested in the study of culture. Mead's main purpose of writing this book was to apply all her anthropological expertise that she learnt during her fieldworks to the immediate problem of 'winning the war'; and at the same time, that Americans should also feel that ethically, they were on the 'right' side. The first nine chapters of the book are devoted to the discussion on 'American character'—their morale, their mobility, attitude towards their family, success, conformity, their attitude towards foreigners and aggression, etc. besides their entire process of socialisation. Many readers may not agree with all the observations that Mead has made in her book, but will necessarily find the volume stimulating.

7.4 Ralph Linton

Born in Philadelphia, Ralph Linton (1803–1953) received his education in different universities of America. Right from his school days, Linton was interested in archaeological excavations. He graduated from Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania in 1915. Even before entering for a Master's degree in the University of Pennsylvania, he had participated in two archaeological excavations—one in the Southwest, and another in Quirigua, a Mayan archaeological site in Guatemala. He graduated with *Phi Beta Kappa*, the oldest and the most prestigious honour to be awarded for academic excellence to the undergraduates and graduates in America. During his Master's course, he came in contact with Frank Speck, a Professor of Anthropology in the university, and also participated in archaeological fieldworks in New Jersey and New Mexico.

He entered the Columbia University for his Ph.D. programme. That was the era of the 'father', the 'guru', and the 'hero' of American Anthropology, Franz Boas in Columbia University. Linton could never become the blue-eyed boy of Boas, as a result, throughout his anthropological life, he remained staunch critic of Boas and the Boasians. During the First World War, Linton served the US Army for a brief stint (1917–1919). His participation in the US Army influenced him so much that he wrote an article in the *American Anthropologist* Vol. 26, in which he argued that the way the *Men in Uniform* (i.e. military) treated or identified with their symbols, could be considered as *totemism*. Boas was a pacifist, therefore he abhorred extreme nationalism, which he thought instigated for war. Linton, on the other hand, was so obsessed with militarism, that according to Price (2004), he once came to the department in his military uniform, for which Boas reprimanded him thoroughly. Whatever may have been the cause, Linton left Columbia, and came to Harvard University. At Harvard, he did two important fieldworks; first, at Mesa Verde, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, located in Colorado; second, he joined as a member of the team in Bayard Dominick Expedition—a scientific expedition carried out in 1920 to the Polynesian islands of the Pacific. The expedition was sponsored by the British Museum of Marquesas. During this expedition in the Pacific, his interest

shifted from archaeology to anthropology. Soon after his return from the Marquesas in 1922, he obtained his Ph.D. degree from the University of Harvard in 1925.

Linton first joined as the Curator of Field Museum of Chicago. Here, he again engaged himself in excavating the Ohio site, where he had earlier worked during his graduate course. At the same time, he also worked on the museum and published materials on the Pawnee people—an American Indian group based near Oklahoma. Between 1925 and 1927, Linton set out for an extensive collection trip to Madagascar for the field museum. This time he also did his own fieldwork. The result of this personal fieldwork was the publication of his only ethnographic monograph *Tanala: A Hill Tribe of Madagascar* (1933).

He returned to United States to join the University of Wisconsin, Madison, first as a lecturer in the joint Department of Sociology and Anthropology; and later, as the Head of the separate Department of Anthropology. Some of the distinguished anthropologists, such as Clyde Kluckhohn, Sol Tax, Phillio Nash, Marvin Opler were from among his students at Wisconsin. Until he joined Wisconsin, Linton was like a romantic researcher, but in Wisconsin, his penchant for teaching and publishing as a theoretician developed. In addition, his intellectual encounter with Radcliffe-Brown in the University of Chicago made him a serious theoretical writer in anthropology. In 1937, Linton joined the Department of Anthropology, Columbia University. Linton had already vexed relationship with the patriarch of anthropology in Columbia, Franz Boas. When Boas retired, much to the discomfort of the Boasians in general, and Ruth Benedict in particular, Ralph Linton was appointed the head of anthropology department in Columbia University—the department that had been founded and nurtured by Boas for decades. The Boasians wanted Ruth Benedict to hold the Chair, but it went in favour of Linton by the university administration. This left Benedict always morose, and Linton always against the Boasians. It was even to the extent that Linton complained against many of the Boasians to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) that they were communists; for which, many of them had to bear the brunt and were blacklisted.

At last, Linton moved to the Yale University, where he taught from 1946 till his last breath in 1953. Linton was elected a Fellow of the *American Academy of Arts and Sciences* in 1950. During his Yale years, he made an extensive trip to South America, where he once suffered from heart problems. This made his health very precarious. On the Eve of Christmas in 1953, he died of the same heart complications that he had earlier suffered and developed during his trip to South America.

The significant books that Linton wrote are as follows:

1. *The Study of Man* (1936).
2. *The Cultural Background of Personality* (1947).
3. *The Tree of Culture* (1955) published posthumously.

He first wrote a textbook in anthropology *The Study of Man* (1936). In the ‘Preface’ (pp vii) of the book, Linton writes, ‘This book has been largely inspired by the difficulties which the author has encountered in his search for some work which was broad enough to provide beginners with the grounding in the essentials of

Anthropology'. The voluminous book consisting of 499 pages contains 26 chapters, excluding the 'Introduction' and 'Conclusion'. Besides discussion about the human origins, race, and racial differences, the book also treats a number of topics such as, family, marriage, culture, tribe and state, local groups, different schools of thoughts in anthropology, including the culture and personality school. The most significant chapter in the book has been the chapter on 'status and role'. Linton's interpretation of *status* and *role* still holds significance in anthropological research. Any fieldworker, while collecting information during his research, meets a lot of people who assist him as informants or key informants. During their interviews, the researcher must keep himself aware of the *status* and *role* of each individual he meets by chance or by choice. According to Linton, there are two types of statuses, viz. *Ascribed status* and *Achieved status*. The attributes of ascribed status are those that an individual acquires from his birth in a society, such as, his sex, caste, clan, and family in which he is born, kinship relationships. The attributes of the achieved status are those that an individual acquires from his good or bad works, education, profession, wealth, leadership, etc. in the society in which he lives.

With each *status* a *role* is also prescribed. For example, a father has a *status* of being head of the family; accordingly, his *roles* are defined. He is expected to take care of his wife and children. Similarly, the wife and the children have also their respective *statuses* and *roles*. This is not only true in case of a family; but in a band society, the headman; in a tribe, the members of the tribal council; in chiefdom, the Chief; and in a Kingdom, the King; each has a definite *status* and accordingly, defined *role*.

Linton's next important book is *The Cultural Background of Personality* (1947). Linton was though against all the Boasians in general, and Ruth Benedict in particular, but his own contributions to the 'culture and personality' school of thought in anthropology are no less important in any respect. This is very much reflected in his book *The Cultural Background of Personality*. Professor Linton starts his book with the suggestion that culture and personality school is the product of collaboration between psychology, sociology, and cultural anthropology.

Some of the lines of the review of the book written by Madeline Kerr published online by the Cambridge University Press on 21 August 2012 (p. 65), are as follows:

'*The Cultural Background of Personality*', though not a long book, is packed with so many stimulating ideas that it is impossible in a short review to do more than indicate a few of the topics treated. The first important point is the emphasis laid on the theory that personality is a dynamic continuum and 'not only a continuum but a continuum in a constant change'. Probably the majority of psychologists would at least pay lip-service to this statement, but for some obscure reasons, most seem to forget it when developing theories about personality. Professor Linton never falls into this error'. In order to prove his point, at the end of his book, Linton writes, 'As the individual matures and then ages, he constantly has to unlearn patterns of response which have ceased to be effective and to learn new ones more appropriate to his current place in society'. (ibid.)

Another conceptual contribution that Linton made in this book has been the distinction between '*ideal culture*', '*real culture*', and '*culture construct*'. Ideal

culture is that which includes all the norms, values, behaviour and practices, that are written or unwritten, but are prescribed in a society and expected to be followed by its members, and transferred from one generation to the next. In addition, it also includes all the desired elements of a culture, material, and non-material both. Ideal culture manifests what ought to be done and what ought not to be done by the members of the society. Real culture, on the other hand, is that which the members of the society actually do. It examines whether the prescribed norms, values, and ideals of the society are followed by its members in letter and spirit or not. If there are deviations, then to what extent? Culture construct is altogether a different thing. In fact every anthropologist 'constructs' a culture that he studies the way he conceives it in his mind. Every anthropologist has his own predilections that is reflected in his writings also. Therefore, two anthropologists when study the same society and the same culture, their conclusions are hardly ever found similar.

An anonymous reviewer commented, 'The book is written in an easy style characterised by much felicity of phrasing. The following example will illustrate this point. "Culture patterns come to the individual like suits of ready-made clothes". Psychologists and anthropologists will find this book most valuable, both as stimulus to further explorations and to guide to the topography of this broader-land of the social sciences'.

The Tree of Culture, published posthumously (1955), is yet another important book of Ralph Linton. After his death in 1953, Linton's third wife, Adeline Hohlfeld, who worked as his secretary and editor as well as collaborator, managed to get the book published in 1955, which became one of the most popular textbooks of its time in anthropology in American universities.

In *American Anthropologist Volume 58*, Cole (1956), who was the founder of the Department of Anthropology in Chicago University and a former student of Franz Boas, has very aptly reviewed this book. In order to understand what the book is all about, it would be pertinent here to quote (p. 188) some lines of the reviewer:

In the *Tree of Culture*, ... the author (Linton) summarises his ideas on the growth and nature of culture.... The work is divided into ten parts.... In the first two parts, the volume moves rapidly from pre-human forms to early man and environments in which he lived, then treats the varieties of human cultures and the processes involved in culture change: (*such as*), innovation, borrowing, and the elimination of older culture elements. Linton here takes note of the change from food gathering to agriculture and other controls over the environment.... Part three takes up basic inventions and the appearance of cities and states. Here is presented a unique discussion of the difference between the cultures of peasant communities and civilisation, the latter defined primarily by the presence of cities. In part four, there is a brief shift back to the Palaeolithic cultures, followed by a brief section on Historic Hunters and Food Gatherers. All the foregoing serves as an introduction to the major part of the volume: an areal discussion of Southeast and Southwest Asia, Europe, the Mediterranean, the Orient and the New World. Probably no volume of modern anthropology presents such a global view of history of culture, from Neolithic to historic times.... Perhaps the best section is that which deals with Africa. Starting with prehistory, Linton discusses the

development of physical types; the tolerance of the dark-skinned peoples to malignant malaria is suggested as one cause of their ability to survive and spread ... the African Negroes have shown a genius for state-building unsurpassed by any other people, except possibly the Incas of Peru. Non-Negro Egypt presents a somewhat different picture where progress was 'stultified' by the development of one of the most rigid and highly centralised governmental systems which the world has seen. ... It is a monumental volume worthy of a great teacher.

7.5 Abram Kardiner

Abram Kardiner (1891–1981) was not an anthropologist. By training and profession, he was a psychiatrist at the Columbia University in New York—today known as the Psychoanalytic Clinic for Training and Research. However, his contributions to the culture and personality school of thought in anthropology are very seminal. Kardiner worked with Freud during the early 1920s; although, he is considered as Neo-Freudian. In the first half of the twentieth century, Freud's theories were either completely accepted, or completely rejected by the social scientists. Neo-Freudians were those who accepted some of the basic tenets of Freud and also incorporated in their researches; but rejected the rest. Abram Kardiner was one among such researchers. While working in Columbia University, Kardiner came in close contact with scholars, who were already engaged in exploring the relationship between culture and personality in the Department of Anthropology under the leadership of Franz Boas; such as, Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, Ruth Bunzel, Cora Du Bois. Kardiner's interest in the psychological analysis of culture, as also in anthropology, perhaps developed here.

The important books to his credit are:

1. *The Individual and His Society: The Psychodynamics of Primitive Social Organisation* (1939).
2. *The Traumatic Neuroses of War* (1941).
3. *Psychological Frontiers of Society* (1945) co-authored with Ralph Linton.
4. *They Studied Man* (1961) co-authored with E. Preble.

Kardiner's first book was *The Individual and His Society*. The Foreword of the book has been written by Linton. Kardiner himself did not do any ethnographic work ever; however, he intently read a number of ethnographic monographs written by various anthropologists; such as, the ethnographies of the Zuni, the Kwakiutl, the Chuckchee, the Eskimo (all from America), the Trobriand Islanders (of the Pacific), the Marquesas (of Polynesia), the Tanala and the Betsileo (of Madagascar), and so on. He examined the cultures of the above groups with his psychoanalytic insight as well as the existing psychoanalytic theories. He differed from the Freudians in that he did not rest on Freud's '*libido*' theory to be the main explanatory principle for culture and all cultural things. Thus, he ignored Freud's *Oedipus Complex*.

The important concept that Kardiner proposed in his analysis of cultures has been the 'basic personality', which he defined as 'that group of psychic and behavioural characteristics derived from contacts with the same institutions, such as language, specific connotations'. What Kardiner meant was that members of a group or a culture necessarily undergo the similar *rite-de-passage* during the entire course of their socialisation. And the process of socialisation is carried out by different institutions in every society in different ways. Therefore, impact of different institutions of one's society, is very much reflected in the personality of the individual.

In the Foreword of the book, Linton preferred to term Kardiner's *basic personality* as *Basic Personality Structure*. He defined it as such; 'Basic personality structure ... represents the constellation of personality characteristics which would appear to be congenial with the total range of institutions comprised within a given culture...' (1939: v). He further adds, 'Through basic personality we are able to posit the significant cultural influences on the individual in a given society.... In this way, different societies may be compared according to the particular formation of basic personality'. According to Linton, this concept would yield extremely important information on the dynamics of culture change.

In his interpretation of basic personality, Kardiner refers to the impact of different institutions on the personality of an individual. He refers to two types of institutions in any society; viz. *Primary institution* and *Secondary institution*. An institution, he defined as '...any fixed mode of thought or behaviour held by a group of individuals (*in a society*), which can be communicated, which enjoys common acceptance, and infringement of, or deviation from, which creates some disturbance in the individual or in the group' (ibid.). According to Kardiner, the *primary institutions* are those 'which create the basic and communicable problems of adaptation. And the *secondary institutions* are creations of the results of the *primary institutions*' (ibid.).

Kardiner does not provide any specific list of primary institutions, however, what he particularly means here is the family organisation; the family in which a child is born and brought up, the family in which his entire process of socialisation is ensured, such as, birth, early childhood, late childhood, adulthood, old age, death, and after. All the *rite-de-passage* that an individual undergoes in his family during his entire course of life, one can find its impact on his personality. Since all individuals undergo the similar process of socialisation in a society, therefore, despite individual variations in personalities, a good number of common personality traits could be discerned among all the individuals of a given society. Thus, the basic personality of a group emerges.

Not only the *primary* institution influences the personality of individuals in a given society, but it is also influenced by the *secondary* institution. The secondary institutions are, in a way, by-product of the primary institution. The secondary institution includes the entire system of taboos associated with the life-cycle of an individual in the society, his religion, all the religious beliefs and practices that he observes, the folklore, the folktales, the folk songs, the worldview, etc.

Kardiner has elaborately discussed, in his book, the ethnographies, particularly of Marquesas, Tanala, and Betsileo that he read, and concluded that primary institutions are the determining factors for the secondary institutions. Haviland Scudder Mekeel,

an anthropologist interested in psychoanalysis, very critically reviewed Kardiner's *The Individual and His Society* in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 42, 1940. At the end of his review, Mekeel suggests, 'The book should be read carefully and thoroughly by every anthropologist interested in the psychodynamic side of his subject'.

The Traumatic Neuroses of War (1941) is the second seminal publication by Kardiner. The book immediately drew the attention of the anthropologists, as well as, the psychiatrists and psychoanalysts. The reason why it became so popular was because it appeared during the Second World War. The year of its publication coincided with the year when America entered into the war after the bombing of Pearl Harbour in Hawaii by the Japanese Air Force in 1941. Kardiner though did not write the book for the purpose of winning the war, or devising any strategy for it, as did Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead; however, the book served a very useful purpose and soon became very popular.

The book is all about the 'shell-shock', i.e. the psychological disturbance caused by prolonged exposure to active warfare, especially being under bombardment during the First World War (1914–1918). It was during the First World War that the true nature of the 'shell-shock' experienced by the front-war soldiers was realised and its aftereffects in everyday traumatic neuroses was established as a subject of investigation by the psychoanalysts and psychiatrists. The book is based upon a number of case histories of the soldiers of the First World War, who suffered from the neurotic trauma of 'shock-shell' after the war was over.

According to one anonymous reviewer of the book in the journal *Psychotherapy Review* (Vol. 21 No. 6), '...the author (Kardiner) discusses the various types of psychoneurotic reactions and illness with numerous case histories of patients studied during the last war (*the First World War*). It is indeed, an excellent review of the subject and it is heartily recommended to anyone interested in the role of the nervous system in the so-called "functional illness, not only during war but also in civilian life"'.

Needless to say that at present time, when several nations in different parts of the world seem to be at the brink of war, and many nations are reeling under the threat of mindless terrorism; the clouds of the Third World War looms large over the globe. At such a juncture, Kardiner's study of the 'shell-shock' in *The Traumatic Neuroses of War*, assume all the more significance. The *second edition* of the book was updated by Kardiner in 1947 and retitled as *War Stress and Neurotic Illness*.

The Psychological Frontiers of Society (1945) is Kardiner's third book, which he wrote with the collaboration of Ralph Linton, Cora Du Bois, and James West. In fact, the very ideas that Kardiner developed in his earlier book *The Individual and his Society* (1939) have been reasserted in this book, and substantiated elaborately with more ethnographic details, particularly that of Marquesas society and culture. Icheiser (1946), in his review published in the *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 51, No. 6, wrote, 'Combining the methods of psychology in depth, (*and*) with findings of modern anthropology, this book approaches the problems of the interdependence between personality, society, and culture. It is centred around the concept of the "basic personality type" as conditioned in different cultures. The author accepts the fundamental postulate of psychoanalysis, according to which, the early experiences

of life in the framework of family relations exert the deepest and the most lasting influence upon the structure and dynamics of personality (*of an individual*)'. He further adds, 'The author applies and tests his method in interpreting Comanche (*an American Indian tribe*) culture, the Alorese culture (*of eastern Indonesia*), the culture of Plainville, (*a small town in the central part of the United States*), and discusses the manifestation of the "basic personality type" in the history of the Western world. Such an attempt to elucidate problems which are of such vital importance for psychology, sociology, and anthropology is always welcome'.

Written by two practising psychiatrists, Abram Kardiner and Edward Preble, *They Studied Man* (1961) is an immensely valuable book for anthropologists. The innovative anthropological thoughts of ten thinkers with their brief biographies have been presented in this volume. The ten chosen personalities are, viz. *Charles Darwin*—the evolutionist and the naturalist; *Herbert Spencer*—the English philosopher who championed the theory of orderly social evolution and social function; *E. B. Tylor*—the 'founder of modern anthropology', who emphasised upon the concepts of 'psychic unity of mankind' and 'animism' in understanding primitive religion; *Sir James Frazer*—the author of the monumental work *The Golden Bough*; *Emile Durkheim*—the French Sociologist, who influenced Radcliffe-Brown and Malinowski both by his basic functional approach in the study of culture and society; *Franz Boas*—who trained maximum number of internationally acclaimed anthropologists in the world; *Bronislaw Kasper Malinowski*—who claimed to be the 'father of functionalism'; *A. L. Kroeber*—who was considered as the Dean of American anthropologists of his time; *Ruth Benedict*—at once a poet and a scientist, who wrote the *The Pattern of Culture* (1934) that became one of the bestsellers of its time in anthropology; and *Sigmund Freud*—the exponent of the most controversial theory in social science—the *Oedipus Complex*.

There are many disagreements among scholars with regard to the 'selectively-chosen' scholars incorporated in the volume. Not that anyone doubts over the merits or the valuable contributions of these scholars in social science in general and anthropology in particular; but the critics argue that a number of equally competent erstwhile anthropologists did not find place in the volume, such as Ralph Linton, M. J. Herskovits, Alexander Goldenweiser, Alfred Hallowell, Clyde Kulckhohn, G. P. Murdock, Morris Opler, Robert Redfield, Edward Sapir, Clark Wissler.

Notwithstanding such criticisms, the excellent feature of the book is the biographical sketch that has been furnished before discussion of the theoretical contributions of each of the ten scholars. The authors have given the account of each anthropologist, as a person, the time in which he/she lived, and his/her everlasting contributions to the 'science of man'. Even to this day, the book is valuable to all those interested in social science—the students, researchers, teachers, and even the enlightened laymen.

7.6 Cora Du Bois

Her full name has been Cora Alice Du Bois (1903–1991). A feature published in favour of Cora Du Bois in the *Harvard Magazine* (2016), under the title ‘Brief Life of a Formidable Anthropologist’, written by Susan C. Seymour, concludes with the remark, ‘Tough, outspoken, principled, but always compassionate, Du Bois was challenging to some, a guardian angel to others’. Cora Du Bois was a self-made woman with commanding personality. At the time when most of the career avenues remained closed for American women, Cora Du Bois was the ‘first woman’ to occupy a professional position in the Peabody Museum of Natural History—one of the oldest, the largest, and the most prolific university museums in the world, located at Connecticut since 1866. She was also the ‘first woman’ to occupy a permanent academic post in the Department of Anthropology, Harvard University. In Harvard, she was only the ‘second female’ professor in the faculty of Arts and Sciences. Seymour adds, ‘Although Cora Du Bois began her life in the early twentieth century as a lonely and awkward girl, her intellect and curiosity propelled her to a remarkable life as an anthropologist and diplomat in the vanguard of social and academic change’.

Born in New York City to a Swiss immigrant father and a first generation German American mother, Du Bois graduated from Perth Amboy High School, New Jersey. She spent a year studying library science in the New York Public Library; then attended Bernard College in New York City; did her MA in history from Columbia University in 1928; and finally, received her Ph.D. at the University of California, Berkeley in 1932. It was Benedict who recommended her to go to Columbia University to study anthropology under A. L. Kroeber and Robert Lowie. Kroeber commented on her Ph.D. thesis that it was unquestionably one of the most brilliant researches he had attended.

She worked at different places under different capacities before getting a permanent academic position in Harvard University. From 1932 to 1935, she remained at Berkeley as a teaching fellow and research assistant for Kroeber. During this period, she conducted ‘salvage ethnography’ (i.e. *the recording and documentation of the practices and folklore of the cultures threatened with extinction due to modernisation and culture contact*) of several Native American groups of north California. In 1935, she first wrote *Wintu Ethnography*, which documented the economic, social, and religious life of the Wintus, their life-cycle, time reckoning and counting, and material culture. Wintus are the Native Americans, who lived in Northern California. In 1938, she wrote another book *The Feather Cult of the Middle Columbia* relating to the theme of salvage ethnography. In 1939, she published *The 1870 Ghost Dance*. The Ghost Dance was a new religious movement of the Native Americans during the second half of the nineteenth century, in which the natives danced to unite with the spirits of the dead (*ancestors*) to fight against the westward expansion of the Euro-Americans, as also to unite the natives that would bring peace and prosperity to them.

While at Bernard, she attended a course in anthropology, and was so captivated by the lectures of Franz Boas, Ruth Benedict, and Margaret Mead, that the seeds

of her anthropological interest were sown during this course. Benedict's 'persona and lectures' fascinated her most. Hereafter, she developed her everlasting academic relationship with Benedict and Mead. In 1935, she received a Fellowship to undertake clinical training and explore the possibilities of collaborative researches between psychiatry and anthropology at the Boston Psychopathic Hospital, at Boston, and New York Psychoanalytic Society in New York. In Boston, she worked with Henry A. Murray, one of the developers of Thematic Apperception Test (TAT). And in New York, she came in contact with Abram Kardiner, who became his mentor. She also taught in Hunter College in New York between 1936 and 37. Kardiner invited Du Bois to collaborate with him in a seminar series at the New York Psychoanalytical Society. Kardiner was then teaching in Columbia University also. Though Kardiner had already developed the concept of 'basic personality structure', but along with Du Bois, he wanted to reexamine it with first-hand ethnographic data in a culture that showed signs of psychopathology. Du Bois volunteered to take up the challenge, and selected to do fieldwork in the Island of Alor in Indonesia. Kardiner and Benedict both arranged funds for Du Bois to undertake this research.

In September 1937, she boarded a ship in New York Harbour, and reached Alor after three months. In the midway, she also met Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson, who were then working in Bali Island. She selected a village in Alor, and built a temporary house there to live in. First she started her work with the help of an interpreter, however, within six months, she was able to collect information in native language. For two years, from 1937 to 1939, Du Bois conducted intensive fieldwork, and that too, living alone in a village among the former headhunters on a remote island Alor in Indonesia. Du Bois meticulously recorded ethnographic account of the Alorese through a longtime stay in the field, applying participant observation; collecting a number of biographies/life histories, case studies, and dreams; administering several psychological tests among the people, such as, Rorschach test, Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), Gestalt Test, Immanent/Situational Judgement Test; Dolls and Drawing Tests.

After her return from the field in the summer of 1939, Du Bois submitted the life histories to Kardiner to analyse. The psychological tests were given to Emile Oberholzer. Trude Schmidt-Wachner was asked to analyse and interpret the drawings. She kept the ethnographic data with herself, with the assumption that if the experts knew the ethnographic accounts and her observations, it might influence their analysis and interpretation. What she found to her delight was that the observations of all the experts significantly corresponded with one another, as also with her own observations. This was altogether a *new methodology* developed in the study of 'culture and personality' research by Cora Du Bois. Du Bois discovered that the 'mode' of the personalities analysed by the experts of the different psychological tests administered by her in the field among the Alorese were identical; hence, she termed it as 'modal personality', and thus, added a new *concept* and *terminology* in psychological anthropology. Though the conclusions arrived at were no different than the 'basic personality structure' of Kardiner, but the difference was that whereas Kardiner interpreted the basic personality type or structure on the basis of the *primary* and the *secondary* institutions of a culture, that of Cora Du Bois' 'modal personality'

was based upon her intensive fieldwork, participant observation, and application of a series of psychological tests. The result of her hard work appeared in the book *The People of Alor: A Socio-Psychological Study of an East Indian Island* in 1944. Henceforth, along with Kardiner, Benedict, Mead, and others, Cora Du Bois also became one of the leaders of 'culture and personality' movement in America that explored the potential impact of culture on the psyche of individual.

The book on Alor was though completed in 1941, but it was published in 1944. After a short 'Introduction', the second section the book contained exhaustive ethnographic description and analysis with a focus on the development of *Alorese* personality, from infancy and childhood to adolescence and adulthood. The third section consists of eight autobiographies of male villagers, and the last section includes data from all the psychological tests that Du Bois had administered. In the end, Kardiner wrote some analytical parts of the book, and other experts contributed to analysis of psychological data. The conclusion of the book has been that because of inconsistent child-care experienced by the children in early childhood, there develops an interpersonal insecurity and emotional instability among the *Alorese* children; which in turn, leads to widespread feelings of distrust among people in Alor. This book of Du Bois permanently established her reputation within American anthropology, and became a classic in early 'culture and personality' studies.

Publication of the *People of Alor* proved to be a shot-in-the-arm for Cora Du Bois. It cemented her reputation as one of the prolific leaders in psychological anthropology, as also a South-East Asia expert. During this time, the Second World War was at its height. Soon after the bombing of the Pearl Harbour, Cora Du Bois was swiftly summoned to Washington, DC. She was asked to serve as a member of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) to work for the Research and Analysis Branch, and made the Chief of Indonesia section. In 1944, she moved to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), and served as Chief of research and analysis for the Army's South-East Asia Command, again as a lone women. In Ceylon, she closely worked with Lord Louis Mountbatten, the British supreme commander, and later the last Viceroy of British India and the first Governor-General of independent India.

It is interesting to note that all the three woman exponents and colleagues, as also collaborators of 'culture and personality' school in anthropology—Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, and Cora Du Bois, in their own ways and capacities, helped the American government during the Second World War. Ruth Benedict's *Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, Margaret Mead's *And Keep Your Powder Dry*, and Cora Du Bois' serving as a member of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in the research and analysis branch of the US defence department, serve testimonies to this.

For her service to the nation as a member of the OSS during the war period, Cora Du Bois received the 'Exceptional Civilian Service Award' from the United States Army in 1946. The Thai government also honoured her with the 'Order of the Crown of Thailand' in 1949. She was elected as the Fellow of the 'American Academy of Arts and Sciences' in 1955. She was the President of 'American Anthropological Association' in 1968–69. And she was also the President of 'Association for Asian Studies' in 1969–70.

Very few Indian anthropologists know about Cora Du Bois' Bhubaneswar connection. Almost for twelve years, from 1961 to 1972, Du Bois focused her attention to the study of ancient city of Bhubaneswar, and directed a number of her research projects and research students to conduct fieldwork in Bhubaneswar. It was the time when Bhubaneswar had been made the capital of the state of Orissa (now Odisha), and quick changes were taking place in this ancient temple city.

Susan C. Seymour, Professor Emerita of Anthropology at Pitzer College, and a former student of Cora Du Bois at Harvard (2015), wrote her biography, titled, *Cora Du Bois: Anthropologist, Diplomat, Agent*. The book is based upon the exhaustive papers of Cora Du Bois that are archived at the Tozzer Library of Anthropology at Harvard. Besides furnishing exhaustive details of Du Bois' professional and personal life, Seymour has also discussed in detail, how despite having served American interest as an agent as a member of the OSS and Chief of Indonesia section, and later, as Chief of Army's South Asia Command in Ceylon; how after the end of World War II, Cora Du Bois came under the radar of American intelligence agencies for her views against the Vietnam war during the cold war period. She was considered a pro-communist, hence troubled by Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) both. Ironically, after the end of the Second World War, CIA had grown out of Office of the Strategic Services (OSS), where Cora Du Bois had so sincerely and honestly worked for years. All this made her very sad and depressed. She zealously began to protect her personal life. Her last book was *Foreign Students and Higher Education in the United States* in 1956. Thereafter, she refrained from writing in spite of persuasion by several of her students and colleagues, including her former Harvard student and biographer, Susan C. Seymour. It is worth noticing that though Bhubaneswar Project of the Harvard University was her brainchild, and she supervised it for over twelve years (1961–1973), yet Cora Du Bois did not write any book on Bhubaneswar, not even any significant article perhaps.

Cora Alice Du Bois died of pneumonia and heart failure at the ripe age of 87, on 11 April 1991, in Brookline, Massachusetts.

7.6.1 After Cora Du Bois?

No doubt, 'modal personality' of Cora Du Bois became immediately very popular, as it paved the way to a number of social situations that could not be earlier interpreted plausibly and *empirically*, either by evolutionism, or diffusionism, or even functionalism, such as, frequency of warfare among the neighbouring groups, beliefs and practices in sorcery, harsh *initiation* ceremonies among several indigenous peoples, aggression, insecurity, or guilt feeling, among them. However, soon the scholars became disenchanted with it also. They alleged that it did not prove to be very productive, as it gave rise to great diversity of modal personalities between cultural groups. According to critiques, it was just a psychological version of Boas' 'historical particularism'. Important critiques of 'basic' or 'modal' personality were Clark Hull, John W. M. Whiting, Anthony Wallace, Bert Kaplan, etc.

Clark Hull, an American psychologist, observed that besides studying the infantile, childrearing practices, and adolescence experiences, the study of personality development must take into account the whole range of social interaction taking place in a group. It is to be noted that Hull had developed his theories of learning and behaviour on his experiments with the rats. John Whiting applied Hull's learning theories on the Kwoma people, a mountain tribe in New Guinea. In his monograph *Becoming a Kwoma* (1941), he emphasised upon scientifically more empirical approaches to be applied in the study of personality and culture. Anthony Wallace also called for more rigorous statistical process and analysis of psychological data relating to individual personality. Bert Kaplan, the famous American psychologist, went a step further and questioned the very existence of 'modal personality'.

To sum up, the studies on 'culture and personality' in American anthropology had reached its zenith during the 1930s and 1940s. In the preceding paragraphs, we have examined the contributions of Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict, Linton, Kardiner, and Cora Du Bois. It could be safely assumed that this school of thought was the product of the World War II, if examined, in the light of the role and contributions of Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, and Cora Du Bois—the three leading figures among the scores of disciples of Franz Boas. The study of 'National Character' and the methodology of 'Study of Culture at a Distance' in psychological anthropology are but the results of the Second World War. Franz Boas' 'cultural relativism', 'anti-ethnocentrism', 'anti-evolutionism', and 'anti-diffusionism' stance in American anthropology, also indirectly influenced the proponents of cultural and personality adherents. Almost all the Boasians agreed that human culture had not developed in a single line as per any *universal law* based upon *psychic unity of mankind*; nor was it only because of diffusion of cultural traits or complexes from any single source.

On closer examination of the contributions of the above exponents of culture and personality school in anthropology, we discover that Ruth Benedict, in her works, emphasised more upon the influence of personality on culture; Margaret Mead, on the influence of culture on personality; and Linton, Kardiner, and Cora Du Bois, on the reciprocal influence between culture and personality. The culture and personality school combined the elements of psychology, anthropology, and sociology. It principally involved the psychoanalytic principles to ethnographic data. The theory chiefly emphasised upon the primacy of infantile and early childhood experiences in shaping the personality of individuals in a given society and culture.

In the history of anthropological thought, 'culture and personality' school, later referred to as 'psychological school in anthropology', gave a new dimension to the study of man and his culture. Though many explanations of its chief exponents still remain to be satisfactorily answered; yet, its basic insight is unquestionable that human personality is so interrelated with cultural factors that it cannot be left out; if, culture is to be fully comprehended. Let it remain unanswered that whether culture or personality, which one of them, plays major determining role in a society.

To end, according to Malefijt (1974: 314), 'Psychological anthropology is still largely considered as a sub discipline of cultural anthropology; but if, there were stronger attempts to examine the ways in which culture-personality-systems enable

cultural institutions to serve their social functions, psychological anthropology could become a partner in joint venture, rather than remaining a “branch” of anthropology’.

7.7 Is Buddha not the Founder of the Psychological School in Anthropology?

It has been stated earlier that Western anthropology owes to ancient Greece and Rome for initial anthropological ideas. However, few people know that as early as the sixth century BC, when Pythagoras and his followers had recognised the *ordered* nature of society, Buddha and his followers in India had already discovered the *scientific* nature of interplay of human mind vis-à-vis body. It is unfortunate that none of the Western anthropologists has ever attempted to discover the anthropological elements in the writings or the preachings of Buddha. On the basis of his pure and unadulterated message, *I dare say that the seeds of the psychological school of anthropology were first sown by Buddha*, much over two thousand five hundred years ago, before any of its assumed exponents, like Margaret Mead, or Freud, or Hume, or Locke had done so.

Barring one exception, and that too in Claude Lévi-Strauss, no anthropologist has ever dared to realise the anthropological importance in the message of Buddha. One is advised to study the concluding chapter of the *Tristes Tropiques* of Claude Lévi-Strauss (1970). Throughout the journey of his life, Claude Lévi-Strauss had not been able to find the solution of the problems (the *contradictions*) that he faced as an anthropologist, until he visited a Buddhist monastery in a village in the Chittagong hill tracts (now in Bangladesh) in September 1950. In the serene atmosphere of the monastery as he entered, Claude Lévi-Strauss (1970: 395) realised, ‘This great religion of not-knowingness is not based upon our incapacity to understand. It bears witness, rather, to our natural gifts, raising us to the point at which we discover truth ... it has achieved something that, elsewhere, only Marxism has brought off: it has reconciled the problem of meta-physics with the problem of human behaviour ... Between Marxist criticism which sets Man free from his first chains, and Buddhist criticism, which completes the liberation, there is neither opposition nor contradiction ... Marxism and Buddhism are doing the same thing, but at a different level’.

7.8 Buddha on Mind and Body

Hart (1988: 25–26) writes that according to Buddha, ‘superficially, one can control the body: it moves and acts according to the conscious will. But on the other level, all the internal organs function beyond our control, without our knowledge. At a subtler level, experientially, we know nothing of the incessant biochemical reactions occurring within each cell of our body. But this is still not the ultimate reality of the

material phenomena. Ultimately the seemingly solid body is composed of subatomic particles and empty space ... even these subatomic particles have no real solidity; the existence span of one of them is much less than a trillionth of a second. Particles continuously arise and vanish, passing into and out of existence, like a flow of vibrations. This is the ultimate reality of the body, of all matters, including human body’.

In one of my articles (Sahay 2008), I have extensively discussed this aspect of Buddha’s contribution to the psychological school of anthropology. In the following paragraphs, I have liberally quoted from the same article:

‘... the Buddha also examined the mind and found that in broad, overall terms it consisted of four processes: *consciousness (vinnana)*, *perception (sanna)*, *sensation (vedana)*, and *reaction (sankhara)*’ (*italics in brackets are in Pali language*¹). According to the Buddha, the first process *consciousness* is the receiving part of the mind, the act of undifferentiated awareness or *cognition*. It simply registers the occurrence of the phenomenon, the reception of any input, physical or mental. It notes the raw data of experience without assigning labels or making value judgment. The second mental process is *perception*, the act of recognition. This part of the mind identifies whatever has been noted by the consciousness. It distinguishes, labels, and categorises the incoming raw data and makes evaluations, positive or negative. The next process of the mind is *sensation*. Actually, as soon as any input is received, sensation arises, a signal that something is happening. So long as the input is not evaluated, the sensation remains neutral. But once a value is attached to the incoming data, the sensation becomes pleasant or unpleasant, and thus *reaction* begins. If the sensation is pleasant, a wish forms to prolong and intensify the experience. If it is an unpleasant sensation, the wish is to stop it, to push it away. Thus, mind reacts with liking or disliking. For example, when the ear is functioning normally and one hears a sound, cognition is at work. When the sound is recognised as words, either with positive or negative connotations, accordingly, the *perception* starts to function. Next *sensation* comes into play. If the words are of praise, a pleasant *sensation* arises, and if they are abuses, an unpleasant *sensation* arises. As per *sensation*, *reaction* takes place. Biologically, there are five sense organs, viz. eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin. According to the Buddha, and the ancient Hindu scriptures, the sixth sense organ is the *mind* itself. Each sense organ has its own receptive feature to contact with, such as, eyes make contact with form, ears with sound, nose with smell, tongue with taste, and skin with touch. The sixth invisible sense organ, i.e. *mind* that makes contact with thought. The same process of *consciousness*, *perception*, *sensation*, and *reaction* occur whenever any of the sense organs receives its respective input, i.e. *stimuli*. Any such *stimuli* cause certain bio-chemical change in human body; and such a change is reflected in different types of *sensations*, either gross or subtle.

These four mental functions are even more fleeting than the ephemeral particles composing the material reality. Each moment that the senses come into contact with any object, the four mental processes occur with lightening rapidity, and repeat themselves with each subsequent moment of contact. So rapidly does this occur that one is unaware of what is happening? Such subtle and scientific discovery of the functioning of human mind and body by the Buddha is no mean an achievement.

Thus, pure message of the *Buddha* is as scientific as H₂O is equal to water. Buddha discovered the scientific nature of human mind and behaviour, not in any laboratory, but in the open air of nature through meditation and serious thought. I do not consider Buddha as a religious leader of his time, but a scientist, a psychologist,

a psychological anthropologist, a human biologist; and above all, a reformist indeed he was.

Note

1. At the time of the Buddha, 'Pali' was the most popular and common language spoken by in India.

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